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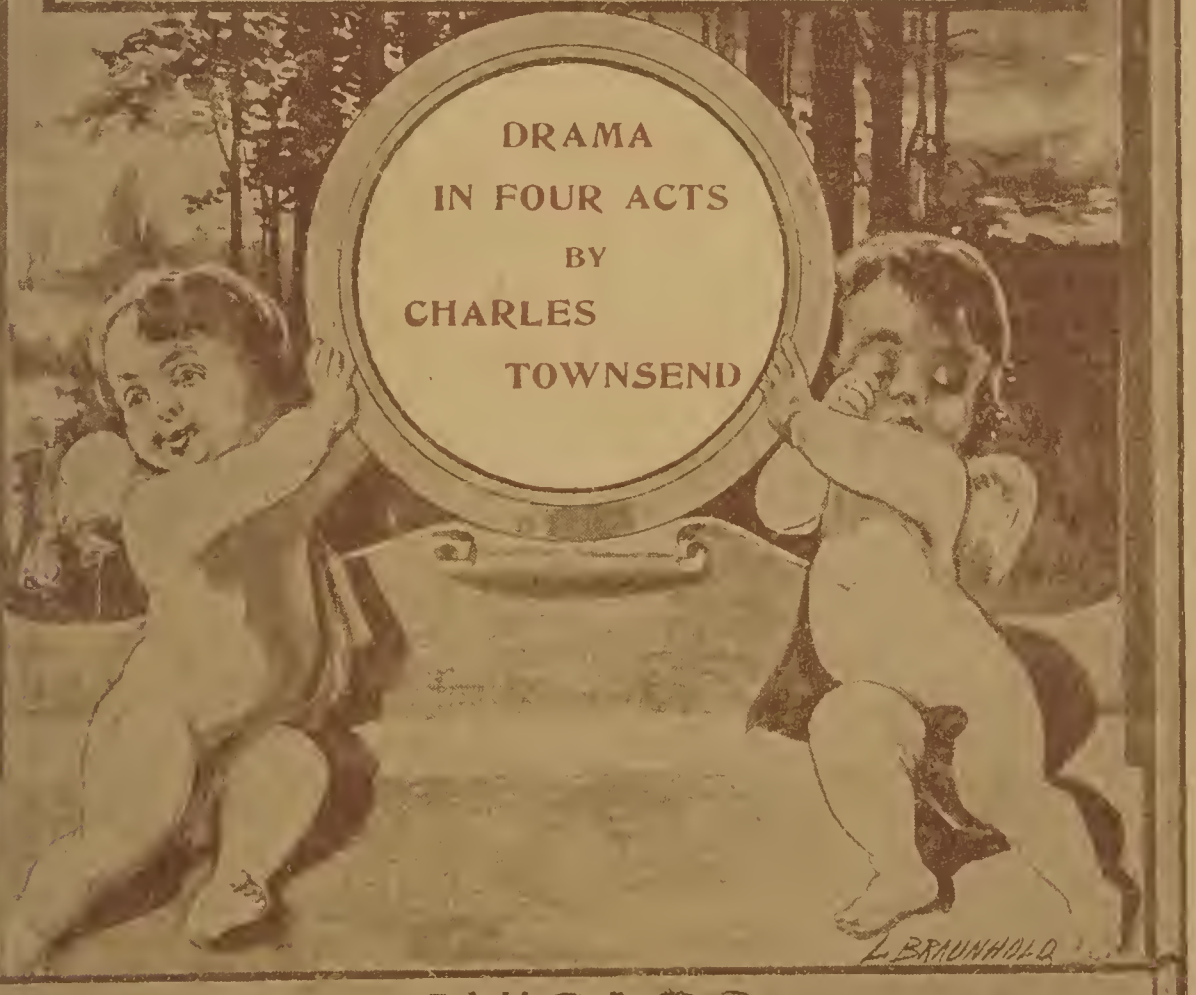
25 Cents

AMERICAN ACTING DRAMA

Uncle Rube

DRAMA
IN FOUR ACTS
BY
CHARLES
TOWNSEND



CHICAGO
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

CAPT. RACKET

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

BY

Charles Townsend.

PRICE 25 Cents.

This latest play by Mr. Townsend will probably be one of his most popular productions; it certainly is one of his best. It is full of action from start to finish. Comic situations follow one after another, and the act-endings are especially strong and and lively. Every character is good and affords abundant opportunity for effective work. Can be played by four men and three women if desired. The same scene is used for all the acts, and it is an easy interior. A most excellent play for repertoire companies. No seeker for a good play can afford to ignore it.

CHARACTERS.

CAPT. ROBERT RACKET, one of the National Guard. A lawyer when he has nothing else to do, and a liar all the time..... *Comedy Lead.*

OBADIAH DAWSON, his uncle, from Japan "where they make tea"..... *Comedy Old Man.*

TIMOTHY TOLMAN, his friend, who married for money and is sorry for it..... *Juvenile Man.*

MR. DALROY, his father in-law, a jolly old cove..... *Eccentric.*

HOBSON, a waiter from the "Cafe Gloriana," who adds to the confusion..... *Utility.*

CLARICE, the Captain's pretty wife, out for a lark, and up to "anything awful"..... *Comedy Lead.*

MRS. TOLMAN, a lady with a temper, who finds her Timothy a vexation of spirit..... *Old Woman.*

KATY, a mischievous maid..... *Soubrette.*

TOOTSY, the "Kid," Tim's olive branch..... *Props.*

SYNOPSIS.

ACT. I. Place: Tim's country home on the Hudson near New York. Time: A breezy morning in September. The Captain's fancy takes a flight and trouble begins.

ACT. II. Place; the same; Time; the next morning. How one yarn requires another. "The greatest liar unhung," Now the trouble increases and the Captain prepares for war.

ACT. III. Place: the same. Time: evening of the same day. More misery. A general muddle. "Dance or you'll die." Cornered at last. The Captain owns up. All serene.

Time of playing: Two hours.

Order a sample copy, and see for yourself what a good play it is.

UNCLE RUBE

An Original Drama in
Four Acts

BY

CHARLES TOWNSEND

Author of "Capt. Racket," "The Captain's Wager," "The Dark Tragedian," etc.

CHICAGO

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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UNCLE RUBE.

CHARACTERS.

Reuben Rodney, a Justice of the Peace, School Trustee, and a master hand at "swappin' horses" .	*Character lead*
Deacon Smailey, a smooth old villain	*Character heavy*
Mark, his son; a promising rascal .	*Second heavy*
Gordon Gray, a young artist . . .	*Juvenile lead*
Upson Asterbilt, a New York swell .	*Character comedy*
Ike, the hired man	*Eccentric*
Bub Green, a young rustic	*Low comedy*
Bill Tappam, a constable	*Comedy*
Milicent Lee, "the pretty schoolma'am"	*Juvenile lady*
Mrs. Maria Bunn, a charming widow	*Character comedy*
Taggs, a waif from New York . .	*Soubrette*

TIME.—Mid-autumn. PLACE.—Vermont.
TIME OF PLAYING.—Two hours and a quarter.

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SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAMMES.

ACT I.—The "old homestead." Ike is mystified. The Deacon hears some plain talk. Uncle Rube arrives. Some city yarns. The battle of the bees. "Now I call this a reg'lar circus!"

ACT II.—The Constable's office. — Bub Green wants revenge. Mark's proposal. Milly's answer. The Deacon's cunning plot to ruin Uncle Rube. A receipt for $10,000. The plot succeeds.

ACT III.—Kitchen in the old farmhouse. Getting supper. Milly speaks her mind. Mark gets impudent. He catches a tumble. Uncle Rube and the pop corn. Popping the question. The supper. Uncle Rube arrested!

ACT IV.—The Constable's office. Waiting for news. Gordon gives Mark a lesson in manners. The acquittal. Uncle Rube opens court. Some hard swearing. Taggs on her muscle. The Deacon is caught in his own trap. Milly's fortune. Happy ending.

COSTUMES.

(See also, "Remarks on the Play.")

Rube. Act I.—First dress; linen duster, straw hat, light trousers, shoes. Changes to overalls, boots, vest, gingham shirt; no coat. Act II.—Same as last dress, with cloth cap and coat. Act III.—Ordinary sack suit, soft bosom shirt with collar and tie. Wears no coat until he sits at table. Act IV.—Black sack suit, soft black hat.

Deacon. Old-fashioned black broadcloth suit, with straight brim black high hat. No change. Overcoat in Act III.

Mark. Act I.—Rather "flashy" outing suit, straw hat, low shoes, walking stick. Act II.—Light col-

ored sack suit; light soft hat, gloves. Act III.—Full evening dress, cape overcoat, silk hat. Act IV.—Same as Act II.

Gordon. Act I.—Corduroy or velveteen suit; soft shirt; fez or artist's cap with tassel. Act II.—Black or dark brown sack suit, derby hat. Act III.—Black cutaway frock coat, vest and trousers to match. Act IV.—Same as Act II.

Upson. Act I.—Fancy light coat, roll front, very loud colored double breasted silk vest, big cuffs, highest possible white collar, flaming tie, laundered shirt with loud colored bosom, straw hat. Act II.—Same, with light derby hat. Act II.—Similar to Gordon, except for the cuffs and collar. Act IV.—Double breasted coat, fancy vest and trousers, derby.

Ike. Act I.—Overalls in boots, vest, no coat nor collar. Acts III. and IV.—Same, except that coat is worn.

Bub. An ill-fitting "bargain" suit—coat too large and trousers too short, showing several inches of ankle.

Bill. Ordinary sack suit; overcoat in Act III. Soft hat.

Milicent. Act I.—Light walking dress, straw hat, parasol. Act II.—Same. Act III.—Pretty but inexpensive house dress, hat and wrap or jacket. Act IV.—Same.

Mrs. Bunn. Act I.—Calico wrapper. Acts II. and IV.—Walking dress. Act III.—Neat house dress.

Taggs. Dress with short skirts. Wears hat in all but Act III.

PROPERTIES.

(See, also, "Scene Plot.")

ACT I.

Common dash churn. Easel with sketching paper, and camp stool. Rustic bench. Half a dozen bundles and boxes wrapped in paper. Old-fashioned carpet-bag and gingham umbrella. Broom.

ACT II.

Plain desk with pen, ink, writing paper and blotters. Half a dozen wooden bottom chairs. Small, plain table or stand. Newspaper. Pair of spectacles. Two large envelopes, one sealed, the other unsealed; the latter contains ten bills. Map and auction bills on wall.

ACT III.

Firewood. Small kitchen stove with length of pipe, elbow and collar to fit against rear flat, as if the pipe ran through it. Teakettle, teapot with tea, table to seat eight, with common modern chairs, pan of biscuit in oven, plates, cups, saucers, knives, forks and spoons for eight, sugar bowl and sugar, milk pitcher and milk, butter, cake, pie, dish of potato salad, cupboard, two tin pans, pop corn in the ear, tea caddy and tea, broom and dust pan. Lighted lamp on table.

ACT IV.

All as in Act II. Add letter in envelope, for Milicent to bring on. Bible.

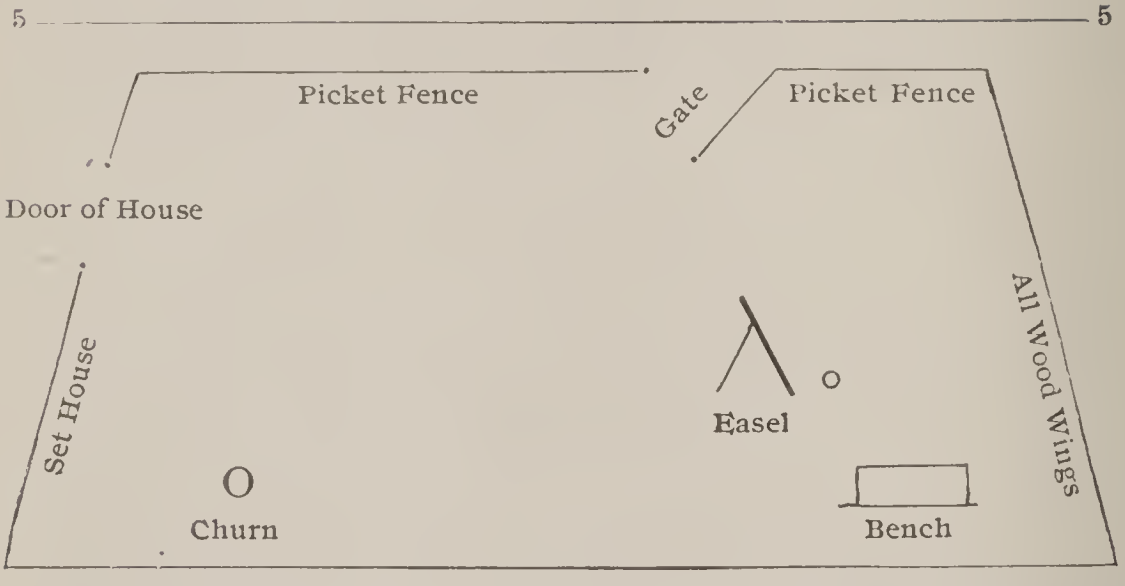
SPECIAL NOTICE: When this play is produced by dramatic clubs a reliable and careful man should be engaged to look after the properties. *This is vitally important.* The properties are all simple and easily arranged, but nothing should be left to chance. Everything required must be on hand by seven o'clock and carefully checked off on the list.

MUSIC.—Always have an orchestra if possible—at least a violin and piano. Have the musicians present for the final rehearsals and have the music carefully rehearsed. SPECIALTIES may be introduced *ad lib.* in the play—especially in the first and third acts.

SCENE PLOT.

ACT I.

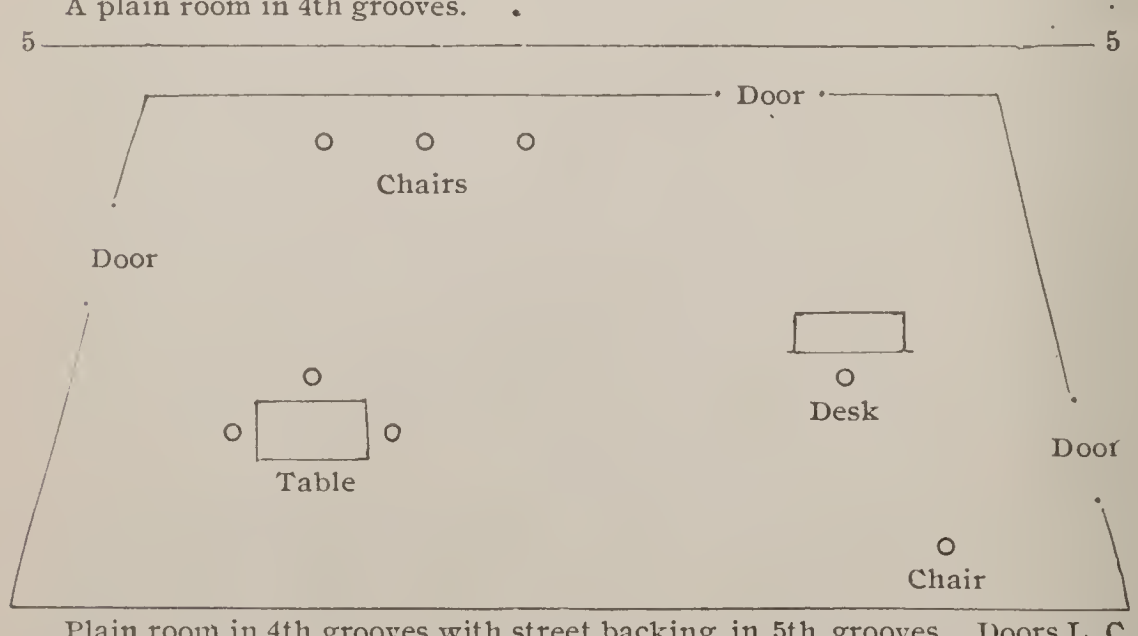
Lawn or garden in 5th grooves.



Lawn or garden in 5th grooves. Low picket fence crosses behind 4th grooves. Gate L. C. opening in and towards L. Set house R. with practicable door. L. wings all trees. Green baize door. Churn and stool R. front. Easel and camp stool up L. C. Rustic bench down L. Lights all on. Time, morning.

ACTS II. AND IV.

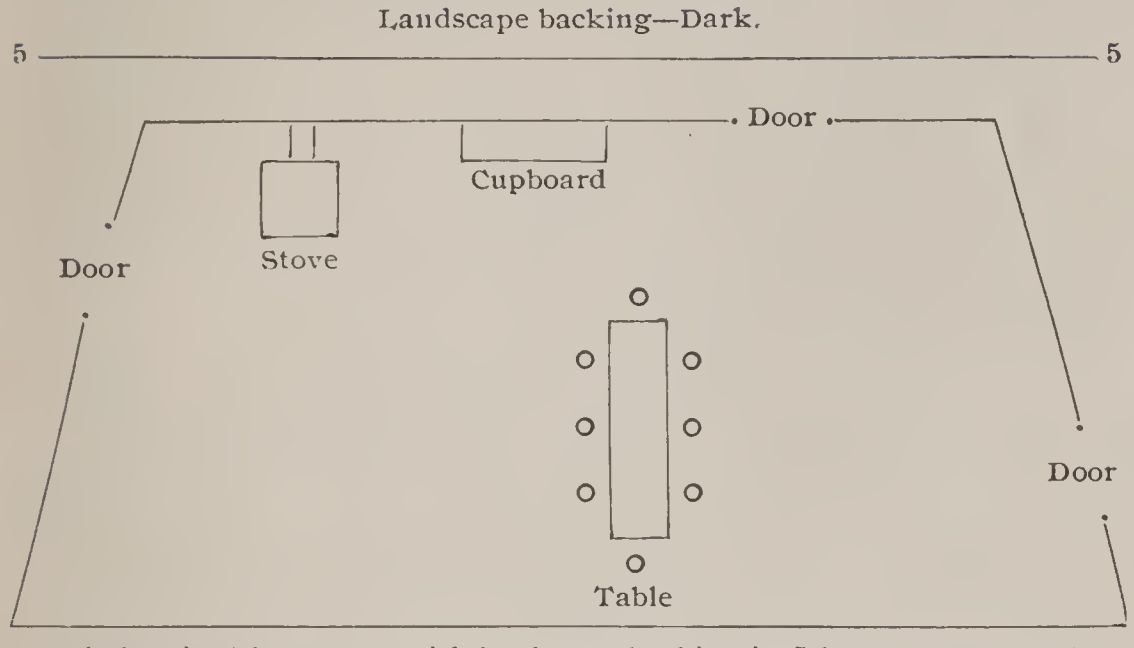
A plain room in 4th grooves.



Plain room in 4th grooves with street backing in 5th grooves. Doors L. C. in flat, R. U. E. and L. 1 E. Desk and chair L. Small table and three chairs R. C. Three chairs at rear, one L. front. No carpet. Map and auction bills on wall. Lights on. Time, morning.

ACT III.

A kitchen in 4th grooves.



Kitchen in 4th grooves, with landscape backing in 5th grooves. Rear border lights off, as landscape must be dark. Doors L. C. in flat, R. U. E. and L. 1 E. No carpet. Table C. Stove up R. (*See* "PROPERTY PLOT.") Cupboard L. of stove. Door in flat to open on stage. Lights on.

REMARKS ON THE PLAY.

Although "Uncle Rube" is a star rôle, yet the play contains no small parts. Every character is first-class, and gives splendid opportunities for strong individual work.

The stage directions for this play are given with the utmost care and should be followed to the letter. *Rehearse the business and by-play as carefully as you do the lines.* And as a further aid to a correct performance the author gives the following valuable advice regarding each character.

Uncle Rube. Age about 50. He is an ideal "Yankee," active, keen and wide-awake. His speech is not nasal, but is marked by a drawl in some cases and a clipping of letters in others. Thus, the abbreviation "y' "

(you), is spoken as if written "yuh," while in "and" only the n is heard. He is good natured to a degree, but if any one is "looking for trouble" he is ready to accommodate. The actor who plays this part may be short or tall, stout or slender. The face may be smooth shaven, or the typical "goatee" may be worn. All this is immaterial, but in any event the face, neck and hands must be made up with a tan shade of grease paint indicative of his out-door life. The hair and eyebrows are slightly gray.

Deacon Smailey. Age 55. A thin, nervous, raspy-voiced, dyspeptic old villain. Use sallow as a body color and shade the cheeks and temples with light brown, to give the face a lean and hungry look. Use no rouge. Line the forehead and eyes. Shade the lower eyelids. Extend the lines of the mouth downward. The face is smooth shaven. Hair a little gray. Speak the lines throughout in a high voice, with a very faint "twang." The Deacon endeavors to be smooth in speech at times, but that is always assumed, and he should quickly drop back into his usual tone.

Mark. Age 23. Make up dark, with small, black mustache. Although Mark is a scoundrel he might, from his speech and manner, be mistaken for a gentleman. Keep that fact in mind when playing this part and thus avoid any "heavy villain" melodramatic business. His city life has given him a self-confident manner with an inclination to swagger a little—but this must not be overdone, for he is in no sense a "tough."

Gordon. Age 28. Gordon is a high bred, high spirited young gentleman. He is a society man, polished in speech and manner, somewhat inclined to chaff, but always courteous. His speech is that of the typical New York gentleman—well modulated and rather slow. Make up fair and either smooth shaven or with a light mustache.

Upson. Age 21. One of the new school of dudes —idiotic, as such freaks always are, yet something of a

"scrapper" in a pinch. The absurd walk (with mincing steps, the arms bent and raised a little), the vacant look, and drawling tones must be kept up at all times, even during his row with "Bub." Make up pale and smooth shaven.

Ike. Age 50. A tanned, weather-beaten, clumsy, good natured son of the soil. Make up face, neck and hands with tan grease paint. Should be smooth shaven, if Rube wears a beard; otherwise chin whiskers should be worn. Speak in a drawling Yankee dialect, but be careful about overdoing it.

Bub. Age 20. A sloppy, dull pated yokel—bumptious and disagreeable. Must be very awkward in gait and gestures. Make up red faced, smooth shaven, with sandy hair. Speak with a snuffle or as if there were something in the mouth. This is a low comedy rôle and should be as uncouth as possible.

Bill. Age 45. This is a "straight" part with comedy lines, except in the third act. The character, therefore, has no marked peculiarities, although an occasional twist is given to some of the speeches.

Milicent. Age 20. A breezy western girl, fearless and independent. She says what she means and is not afraid to say it. At the same time she is womanly and sympathetic.

Mrs. Bunn. Age 40, but looks younger. Mrs. Bunn is an attractive woman. She is bright, breezy and full of life. Her speech is not always grammatical and she has a faint dialect. Her lines should be delivered with considerable emphasis, not always in the right place, as this is properly a character rôle.

Taggs. Age 15. This is a soubrette lead—a rough soubrette—and is a difficult rôle to portray. Taggs is "a daughter of the tenements," a product of the strange "East Side district" of New York. She is slangy, but not vulgar; rough and "scrappy," but truthful and good hearted. She is always in a hurry—comes and goes with a rush,—and is seldom quiet. The "tough" dialect should be carefully practiced until

it is thoroughly mastered. The lady who plays this exacting part must free herself from conventionality—must enter heart and soul into the rôle—remembering it is all assumed for the time—*and must not be afraid to romp and shout.* If of small figure she may be far older than Taggs appears to be, as the short skirts will give her a childish appearance.

To the Stage Manager.—You should insist that the lines be learned at the outset. No effective rehearsing can be done, at least by amateurs, until the parts are committed. Rehearse the business over again and again, for it is as important—often more important—than the lines themselves. The second and fourth acts have quiet endings, but the finale of the third act demands some movement, and the first act ends with a rush. Look to this act particularly. Study the play yourself very carefully before the first rehearsal, so that you may be thoroughly in touch with it, and then allow no arguments nor grumbling while a rehearsal is on.

Let all who take part remember that the stage manager has a thankless position, and endeavor by close attention, patience and forbearance to make his work as easy as possible.

UNCLE RUBE.

ACT I.

SCENE. — *The Rodney farm in midsummer. See "Scene Plot." Discover* **Ike** *seated down* R. *churning.* **Gordon** *up* L. C. *sketching. Lights all on. Music: lively for rise.*

Ike. [*Sings chorus of popular song.*] Wall, great grasshoppers! This here 's the crankiest consarned milk 'n' cream 'n' butter I ever seed. I've churned 'n' churned till I'm jes petered out 'n' it won't gether nohow.

Gor. Good reason, Ike.

Ike. Why?

Gor. It's all your fault.

Ike. I want t' know!

Gor. Sure thing. You have been howling like a tornado, and the agitation of the air prevents the paddle of the churn from breaking up the small globules of the cream.

Ike. I want t' know! Say, Mr. Gray, what in sam hill hes the globber—what - you - call - ems—got t' du with it?

Gor. They unite and form the butter.

Ike. Fish hooks! Think o' the churnin' I've done 'n' never knowed afore what I were doin'. Say, Mr. Gray?

Gor. Yes? [*Continues sketching.*]

Ike. It ain't none o' my feedin', but atween you 'n' me 'n' the hitchin' post what you goin' ter du with all them air picters you're makin'?

Gor. Sell them, I hope.

Ike. Shucks! Who to?

Gor. To whoever will buy them.

[*Enter* **Deacon Smailey** *from* L. U. E.]

Dea. [*Pausing outside of gate.*] Hello, young man.

Gor. Good morning, deacon.

Dea. Painting pictures, hey?

Gor. No, sir, I'm sketching.

Dea. How can any sane man waste the precious moments of life in such idle nonsense?

Gor. Give it up, deacon.

Dea. Pictures are evil, pernicious and wicked.

Gor. Then I'll never put you in one.

Ike. Haw! haw! haw!

Dea. What are you laughing at?

Ike. Fly tickled me.

Dea. You're an evil-minded man of sin.

Ike. I want t' know! That's fearsome bad, ain't it? Kinder sorter apt ter spile the butter, I guess.

Dea. Has Reuben returned?

Ike. [*Wheeling churn towards the house.*] Nope, not yit.

Dea. When is he coming, hey?

Ike. When he gits here, 'less he stops ter play tag summers. [*Exits, with churn, into house.*]

Dea. [*Coming down.*] Oh, the impudence of these farm hands! How much longer are you going to stay around here?

Gor. Well, deacon, I may remain for a period of more or less—perhaps twice as long, or possibly not so much.

Dea. Um! You are a smart young man—a *very* smart young man; but be careful that it doesn't strike in.

Gor. Thank you, deacon. [*Comes down and feels his pulse.*] Excuse me.

Dea. Sir! [*Attempts to pull away.*]

Gor. Steady! [*Holds his wrist.*] Deacon, you're in a bad way, deacon, a most awfully bad way. You need a prescription.

Dea. Sir, I——

Gor. Steady! Take equal parts of anti-hypocrisy, miser tonic, extract of honor, oil of decency, and mix them thoroughly in some milk of human kindness. Take a dose whenever you feel meaner than usual; [*Goes up* R.] and if it doesn't strangle you, you may become a half-way decent man in time. [*Exits in house.*]

Dea. The young upstart! The beggarly painter! [*Goes up, sees sketch which remains on easel, tears it. This is observed by* **Mark**, *who has entered* C.] I'd like to treat him the same way.

Mark. Hello!

Dea. Mark!

Mark. What's the matter, deacon?

Dea. My son, I—er——

Mark. Oh, tell the truth, dad.

Dea. My son, I always speak the truth. Falsehood is——

Mark. Gammon! Don't try to humbug your dutiful son. It won't work.

Dea. [*Blustering.*] Look here, young man! Don't you dare be impertinent to me, sir.

Mark. Gammon some more. Don't try a bluff game, either. That won't work.

Dea. Mark, my son, has your city life caused you to forget to honor your father? It's sad, sad! [*Sits on bench.*]

Mark. Nixy, dad. Don't do the weep act. [*Stands with one foot on bench.*] Look here. When I was a kid I believed in you and your peeksniff humbug. [**Deacon** *rises.*] Now sit down and hear what I'm saying. [**Deacon** *sits.*] I've been home for ten days, and

I've kept my eyes open. Do you know what I've learned?

Dea. [*Shortly.*] No, I don't.

Mark. Well, I've learned that, if possible, you're a bigger rascal than I am—and that's needless.

Dea. [*Rising.*] Mark, how dare you! How dare you!

Mark. [*Tartly.*] Sit down! [**Deacon** *sits.*] I'm not the least afraid of you, so don't try the high and mighty. Why were you spoiling that picture?

Dea. Because I hate the young snip who made it.

Mark. Why?

Dea. Can I trust you, Mark?

Mark. If there's any devilment afoot with money in it.

Dea. Money—that's right—that's right. Money is the power that sways the world. Get it, get it—and when you do—keep it.

Mark. Not on your life. Get it, and blow it—that's my motto. Now, what's your scheme?

Dea. This is the Rodney farm.

Mark. That's no news.

Dea. It is one of the best farms in the State.

Mark. And that's no news.

Dea. I hate old Reuben—that is if my conscience——

Mark. Well? Go on—never mind your conscience.

Dea. And I want this farm.

Mark. The deuce you do! Why, you own half the county already.

Dea. But I'd rather have this farm than any half a dozen others.

Mark. In order to ruin old Rodney, eh? What for, dad?

Dea. Durn him, he always gets the best of me—beat me for Justice and School Trustee and—everything.

Mark. And I've heard that when you were young men he walloped the daylights out of you.

[*Enter* **Mrs. Bunn** R. U. E.]

Mrs. B. [*As she enters.*] Yes he did, and he can do it again.

Dea. [*Rising and bowing.*] My dear madam——

Mrs. B. Don't you "madam" me, Simon Smailey. I know all about you.

Mark. [*Aside.*] Poor old dad!

Mrs. B. Oh, you're very nice and smooth, and all that, but you can't fool me. There isn't a bigger old fraud in this whole State than you are, you sanctimonious old humbug.

Mark. [*Whistles; aside.*] He's getting it hot.

Mrs. B. You come palavering around so oily—but I can see through you. What do you want, anyhow?

Dea. Have you quite finished? I ain't got anything to say till you run down.

Mrs. B. Now I s'pose you think that's awful smart. But you ain't here for any good 'n' I know it. If Mr. Rodney wasn't so good-natured he'd boot you off of his farm for good. I'd do it in a minute if I was a man.

Dea. I'm sorry you are so set against me, Mrs. Bunn, but I'll try in charity to forget it.

Mrs. B. Don't want you to. Remember it as long 's you can.

[*Enter* **Milicent** C.]

Mil. Good morning.

Mrs. B. Why, Milly Lee, is it really you? [*Kisses her.*] I'm awfully glad to see you.

Mark. [*To* **Deacon.**] Introduce me, dad.

Dea. Milly. [*She turns to him.*] This here's my son, Mark.

Mark. [*Raises hat, bows, then crosses to her.*] I am more than delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Lee. Father has spoken of you so much; [*Turns to* **Deacon.**] haven't you, father?

Dea. Eh? Oh, yes, yes, to be sure. [*Resumes seat.*]

Mrs. B. [*Aside.*] Soft sauder!

Mark. If you have room for another pupil, I should like to——

Mrs. B. Well, you can't, you was expelled along with Bub Green for fighting that poor little consumptive Walter, and you can't get back.

Mark. You are too severe, Mrs. Bunn. A mere act of boyish folly——

Mrs. B. Boyish folly? Why, Milly, he was twenty years old then.

Mark. [*Aside.*] Confound her! [*Crosses.*]

Mrs. B. Besides, Milly isn't teaching a reform school.

Mil. Oh, Mrs. Bunn, you are too severe.

[*Enter* **Ike** *from house.*]

Ike. Hooray! Hooray! He's comin'.

All. Who?

Ike. Uncle Rube, b' gosh! Seen him from the winder upstairs. Bill Tappam's bringin' him, an' he's a hull contraption o' things in ther waggin. [*Exits*, c.]

Mrs. B. My land! Here I've been foolin' time away an' dinner to git. Milly, s' long 's you're goin' to board here this week 'll you mind helpin' me once?

Milly. With pleasure. [*Bows to* **Mark**, *who raises his hat. She then follows* **Mrs. B.** *into house.*]

Mark. Charming girl, dad.

Dea. Yes, rich 's Julius Cæsar, but she don't know it.

Mark. How's that?

Dea. When she came here to teach she boarded at our house the first week. She asked me to look over some papers to see if they needed recording or anything. Among 'em was deeds to some western mining property she thinks is no account. But it's on the boom, and she's richer 'n all get out.

Mark. Good enough. She suits me.

Dea. All right, if that durn Gordon Gray don't cut you out.

Mark. Gordon Gray? Who's he?

Dea. A painter, durn him. 'Sh—they're coming.

Rube. [*Outside.*] Whoa up! Easy, Bill. Stop by ther hoss block. [**Deacon** *and* **Mark** *go up.* **Milicent, Gordon** *and* **Mrs. Bunn** *enter from house, and come to gate.*]

Rube. [*Outside.*] Whoa back! Hello, Ike! Look out fer them bundles! Come along now. Here we air.

[*Lively music. Enter* **Rube** C, *with carpetbag and umbrella, followed by* **Ike**, *with arms full of bundles. Music continues.* **Rube** *shakes hands with* **Gordon**, *kisses* **Mrs. Bunn** *and* **Milicent**, *turns, bumps against* **Ike**, *who tumbles down but clings to bundles.* **Rube** *quickly lifts him up, gives him a push towards the house.* **Ike** *exits.* **Rube** *rushes over and shakes hands with* **Deacon**.]

Rube. How air you, deacon? How's all your folks?

Dea. We're all pretty spry. Here's Mark.

Rube. Wall now, of all things! [*Shakes hands with* **Mark**.] I swan ter gunner 'f I'd a know'd you—dressed up fit ter kill. Say, it was clever o' you ter mog over here. You'll set by fer dinner o' course?

Dea. Thankee, Rube, but we've got tu be getting home. [*Goes up with* **Mark**.]

Rube. Wall, so long, then. Come over agin.

[*Enter* **Milicent** *and* **Gordon** *from house.* **Rube** *crosses, shakes hands with them and converses aside.*]

Mark. Better stay, dad.

Dea. No. I've thought of a scheme that 'll spile all their fun. Come on. [*Exit, with* **Mark**, C.]

Rube. So you're a painter, eh? Wall, ef you want ter keep busy I'll find suthin' fer you ter do. Guess our barn wants paintin' an'——

Gor. But, my dear Mr. Rodney——

Rube. Just call me Uncle Rube. I've been "mistered" down there in York State till I'm plum sick on

it. An' I guess the carriage house wants techin' up a little an'——

Gor. But, my dear Uncle Rube——

Rube. Oh, we kin find suthin' ter keep you goin'. [*Goes toward house.*] Got ter git off some o' these contraptions. An' say, Milly, look out fer a stray dude. I brung one up from York with me. Him an' a gal I rescued from the Cruelty to Children's Society air comin' afoot pickin' posies, ef they ain't lost summers on the way. [*Exits into house.*]

Gor. [*Laughing.*] There! You see it pays to be an artist after all. One can paint fences at least.

Mil. That isn't hard. Think of me.

Gor. I always do.

Mil. I mean of my work. I'm to look out for a stray dude. What is it like?

Gor. You never saw one?

Mil. Indeed, I don't know. We have no such luxuries in the West. Is it dangerous?

Gor. Not in the least. [*Goes up, picks up sketch.*] Well!

Mil. What is it?

Gor. Somebody has been improving my sketch. It looks like a Kansas cyclone.

Mil. What a shame!

Gor. It serves me right. I was cheeky to——the fellow who did it. Shall we go look for the dude?

Mil. [*Going up* c.] You are sure, really sure, that we run no risk?

Gor. Positively—unless it should chance to be smoking a cigarette. [*Exeunt, laughing,* c.]

[*Enter* **Rube** *and* **Ike** *from house.*]

Rube. Wall, now I feel kinder middlin'. Tell y', Ike, I'm glad th' wust kind t' git home. [*They sit.*]

Ike. I calkerlate y' had a scrumptious time down in York—didn't y'?

Rube. It war n't t' be sneezed at.

Ike. Say, what's th' dumbdest thing y' seen?

Rube. There was a hull swad on 'em. 'Bout th' peskiest 'f all was th' waterin' carts.

Ike. Waterin' carts? What's them?

Rube. Waggins full o' water with a dingus on th' hind end es shoots 'er out onto th' streets.

Ike. I want ter know! Don't it make a waller o' mud?

Rube. Can't. Streets is all rock, like th' sides of a house. An' then th' houses! Say, Ike, down 'n N' York houses stan' so clus t'gither thet they tech each other, an' so high they hev t' shovel off th' clouds from th' roofs.

Ike. I want ter know!

Rube. An' they ain't got no yards ner front stoops t' speak of, an' folks eat their dinners at night.

Ike. What durn fools!

Rube. 'N thet ain't th' wust of it nuther. You hafter eat ever'thing with a fork—pie 'n peas 'n sich—an' you never git tea fer breakfast—nothin' but coffee—'bout one good swaller—an' they don't have breakfast 'fore nine o'clock.

Ike. Oh, come now, Rube, thet's puttin' it on too thick. Yer stuffin' me.

Rube. Straight goods, Ike. I'll crook fingers to it.

Ike. But when in sam hill do ther men folks git t' work? What do they do?

Rube. Ther' ain' much hayin' 'n' harvestin' done, but I calkerlate they're some on live stock an' other animiles. Leastways I hearn consid'ble talk 'bout bulls 'n' bears 'n' sheep 'n' tigers—but I didn't see none 'cept up t' Central Park.

Ike. Speakin' o' sheep, your ole black nose ram Billy—th' one what butted you inter th' cistern——

Rube. Consarn him, he wasn't wuth feedin'; what's he been doin' now?

Ike. He's done doin'—he's dead. The railroad killed 'im.

Rube. They did, hey? Wall, they've got a nice

little bill ter pay. I wouldn't a took a hundred dollars fer that ole rascal. Anythin' else happened?

Ike. Heaps.

Rube. Wall, go on. Don't set there like a bump on a log.

Ike. Ef yer gin' ter be cantankerus, I won't tell er blame thing.

Rube. [*Quietly.*] Look here, Ike, I'm bilin' mad already, an' 'f y' don't want th' durndest biggest lickin' thet ever come over the pike, you'll talk fast.

Ike. Ef you try that, I'll hev you took up afore yerself an' bound over by yerself afore yerself to keep ther peace, b' gosh.

Rube. Kinder foxy, ain't you? Wall, go on.

Ike. Bub Green got drunk last week 'n' tumbled inter your cistern 'n' most got drownded.

Rube. Did, hey? Who fished him out?

Ike. I did.

Rube. Great sassafrax! I'll dock y' fer lost time 'n' I've a mind t' lock you up fer preservin' a durn nuisance frum justifiable suicide.

Ike. Bill Dawson come over yes'day. Said you beat him on a hoss trade 'fore y' went t' York.

Rube. No, I didn't. I told him th' hoss was sound 'n' he was sound. I told him th' hoss would stan' 'thout hitchin' an' I guess he would, seein' he was the' balkiest critter I ever seen.

Ike. Wall, that's erbout all.

Mrs. B. [*Appearing at door.*] Dinner's ready. [*Exits.*]

Ike. That's me. [*Exits into house.*]

Rube. That hits Ike. He don't need no second call. S'pose I'll have ter go in 'n' peck a little, but I ain't a bit sharp set—et too much on that air buffum car comin' up.

[*Enter* **Milicent** *and* **Gordon** C.]

Mil. We found them, Uncle Rube. They are coming right along.

Rube. All right. Dinner's waitin'.

Gor. [*Going towards house, with* **Milicent.**] And the dude never frightened her at all. [*They exit into the house.*]

Rube. Shucks! I should hope not. [*Calls.*] Hurry up there, you young folks, 'n' come in tu dinner when you git here.

[*Enter* **Taggs** *and* **Upson** C.]

Taggs. We ain't hungry. We swiped a watermelon.

Rube. Did, hey? That's highway larceny, young woman. Were you in it?

Up. Aw—no. I have some of it in me, though.

Mrs. B. [*At door.*] Dinner—is—*ready!*

Rube. All right. [*Goes up.*] Better come in 'n' git a snack same 's I'm goin' to—you won't git nuthin' 'tween meals. [*Exits into house.*]

Up. Good gwacious!

Taggs. What's the row?

Up. Dinner in the middle of the day. Cawn't do it, ye knaw.

Taggs. Why yer can't, cully?

Up. Aw—yas—but me name is not Cully.

Taggs. Yous a bird. Say, blokie, why yer can't feed yer face at noon, soy?

Up. Nobody evah eats dinnah at noon, ye knaw. Beside I cawn't dine in these clothes, ye knaw. I always wear evening dwess when I dine.

Taggs. [*Aside.*] Wouldn't that kill yer?

Up. What makes you talk so odd, ye knaw?

Taggs. Cause I'm a tenement house kid. What makes yous?

Up. Do I weally?

Taggs. Sure thing.

Up. That's the way all the fellahs in our set talk.

Taggs. Well, yous funnier den ther Salvation Army.

Up. I nevah heard of that army. What do they fight?

Taggs. Booze.

Up. Booze?

Taggs. Booze.

Up. That's new to me.

Taggs. Never heard of booze! [*Aside.*] *Wouldn't* that kill yer? Say, nibsy, Uncle Rube said I could have all the honey I wanted when we got here. Let's go and find a chunk.

Up. All wight. Does it gwow on twees?

Taggs. Grow on trees? Wouldn't that——say, do yous know how they gets honey?

Up. Of cawse. You get it with gwiddle cakes.

Taggs. Come on. Yous so green if yer stan' still yer'll sprout. [*They start up* C., *meeting* **Bub Green**, *who enters* C. *All stop and stare.*]

Bub. Gosh all fish hooks! Who're you?

Taggs. Glory! What a guy!

Bub. Be you visitors?

Taggs. We——be!

Bub. My name 's Green.

Taggs. You look it.

Bub. Needn't be sassy jes 'cause you're a gal. You ain't so much.

Taggs. [*To* **Upson.**] Will yous muggle up an' let ther hayseed insult a loidy?

Up. Of cawse not. You must not insult her, ye knaw.

Bub. [*Throws off coat.*] Come on, yer spindle shank. I'm Bub Green, I be, 'n' I kin lick any dude this side o' kingdom come. Come on! [*Prances about.*]

Taggs. Hooray! Now Upsy, sail in an' do 'im up. I'll referee it.

Up. Yas. [*Gives her his hat, collar, cuffs and tie.*] I haven't got on me boxing suit, but I suppose it doesn't mattah, foh none of the fellahs are here to see me.

Bub. Now, I'll learn y' suthin. [*Rushes at* **Upson,** *who steps aside and knocks him down as he passes.*]

Taggs. Hi, hi, hi! Pretty work!

Bub. [*Sits up; looks dazed.*]

Taggs. All ready fer der nex' round! Time!
Up. Yas.
Bub. [*Dolefully.*] I want t' go home.
Up. All right, sonny, get up.
Bub. Y' won t hit me ergin?
Taggs. [*Disgusted.*] Wouldn't dat kill yer?
Up. [*Putting on collar, etc.*] No, I weckon not. I only joggled his bwains a little.
Taggs. Say, Upsy, yer a peach.
Up. Thanks awfully. [*They go up.*] Now, we'll go and find some honey.
Taggs. Bye, bye, Bub. So long. [*Exits with* **Upson**, C.]
Bub. [*Rises.*] I allers s'posed a dude couldn't fight. Guess I got fooled.

[*Enter* **Rube** *from house.*]

Rube. How d' du, Bub. How's all your folks?
Bub. [*Shortly.*] Folks is well 'nuff.
Rube. Glad on't. Guess you ain't, though.
Bub. Guess I am.
Rube. What makes ther lump on yer head?
Bub. Run ergin a hitchin' post.
Rube. Don't say! Must a been runnin' back'ards.
Bub. Mebbe. But I warn't runnin' back'ards when I fell inter yer blame ole cistern.
Rube. Prob'ly not, Bub. 'Cordin' ter reports you was chuck full 'n' runnin' over jes' then.
Bub. It spiled my clothes.
Rube. Good thing too, if they's anythin' like the ones yer wearin'.
Bub. Them clothes was better 'n these here ones. Cost four dollars 'n' ninety-five cents, b'gosh, 'n' dad says you'll pay fer 'em er he'll sue yer.
Rube. Wall now! I suspicion I orter be scared a few, hadn't I?
Bub. You'll find out.

Rube. Say, Bub, ever hearn tell o' ther bull frog es tried t' swaller a whale?

Bub. Shucks! He couldn't.

Rube. He thought he could, 'n' he swelled up till he busted. That's jes what'll happen ter yer dad. Sue me? Why, you young skeeziks, eff he tries it I'll issue a warrant 'n' arrest you fer bein' drunk 'n' disorderly, incitin' a riot, failure t' commit suicide, spilin' my cistern water, fightin' in my door yard *non compost mental* 'n' tic doleroo! Git now, er I'll throw yer over the fence. [**Bub** *retreats up* C. *Voices of* **Upson** *and* **Taggs** *heard off shouting*, Wow! Mudah! Help! Run, Run!]

Rube. [*Looking off.*] Ef thet durn fool of a dude ain't got among the bees! [*"Hurry" music.*]

[**Upson** *and* **Taggs** *run on* C., *as if fighting bees.* **Rube** *pulls off coat and throws it over* **Taggs'** *head.* **Upson** *runs into* **Bub** *and both tumble over, shouting lustily.* **Ike** *and* **Mrs. Bunn** *enter from house. She has a broom, which she swings lustily, hitting* **Ike**, *who yells and falls. He rises, is hit again, and crawls towards house on hands and knees. She throws apron over her face and swings broom, belaboring* **Upson**, *and* **Bub.** **Deacon Smailey** *starts to enter* C., *stops as if stung, and dances about, shouting*, Condemn yer old bees! Take 'em off! Take 'em off!]

Rube. [C., *with arm around* **Taggs**]. This is what I call a circus! [*Lively march.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE. — **Tappam's** *office at the "Corners." See "Scene Plot," Doors,* L. C. *in flat,* R. *and* L. *Desk and chair down* L. *Table and chairs* R. *Lively music for rise.*

[*Enter* **Tappam** R. *and* **Bub** D. F.]

Bub. Hello.

Tap. Hello you.

Bub. Say, Bill, kin I git you t' du suthin' fer me?

Tap. P'r'aps. What is it? [*Sits at desk.*]

Bub. It's suthin' I want done durn bad.

Tap. Well, set down 'n' tell what.

Bub. [*Seated*, R. *front.*] I want yer to—to——

Tap. Two 'n' two 's four. Been gettin' drunk some more?

Bub. No, I hain't. I want ter git ole Rube Rodney arrested.

Tap. You—don't—say! What fur?

Bub. I fell inter his blamed ole cistern.

Tap. Then he orter make you pay fer rilin' it up.

Bub. A lot of his dinged ole bees stung me.

Tap. That's bad. You might have ther bees arrested.

Bub. 'Twan't no joke.

Tap. I guess yer right, Bub. I'll bet it pizened the bees.

Bub. 'N' then that there dude blacked my eye.

Tap. [*Loudly.*] What! [**Bub** *jumps back.*] Got licked by a dude? Say, you orter be booted; you orter hev a good cow-hidin'; you orter be sent up fer ten year. Why, you good fer nuthin' dongen-head, yer a disgrace to ther whole State o' Vermont. Yer the most disgustable critter I ever come across. Licked by a dude!

Bub. 'Twarn't my fault.

Tap. Oh, 'f course not, sonny. Ther feller wat gits licked ain't never to blame.

[*Enter* **Rube** D. F.]

Bub. [*Not seeing him.*] Wall, I'll git even with ole Rodney.

Rube. All right, Bub, now 's a good time.

Bub. I—I—I didn't mean it, Uncle Rube.

Rube. Say, Bub, you make me think of a rooster that's crowin' fit ter kill, w'en somebody chucks a rock at him 'n' his crow ends in a squawk. You better run along home now, 'fore it rains.

Bub. I'll go 'n' I'll tell dad, 'n' then you'll see. [*Exits* D. F.]

Rube. Anythin' new this mornin'?

Tap. Nuthin pertickler. Here's this week's paper.

Rube. [*Takes it.*] Thankee. [*Sits at desk.*]

Tap. I've got t' go 'n' chop some wood.

Rube. Wall, I'll be here. [**Tappam** *exits* R. **Rube** *reads aloud.*] "Married—John Lyon and Mary Lamb, by the Rev. Jas. Beaver." Quite a menagerie! "Tile Dawson, of Pineville, committed suicide last week." That feller 's allers up t' suthin' t' git his name in the papers. I wonder what he'll do next? "Bill Peter's horse ran away last Wednesday and flung him out and broke his arm, hurt his near hind foot, spoiled his clothes and finally tumbled into the creek, where he lay on his back kicking with all four feet, and he says the wagon is a total wreck." Seems t' me they've got Bill 'n' th' hoss kinder mixed up. "Aunt Keziah Wiggins has our thanks for a nice pair of warm slippers, which we can also use next winter for ear muffs." Nuthin' like bein' pervided fer any emergi*en*cy. Hello! Well, durn his impudence! "Reuben Rodney, Esq., has returned from New York. Wonder if he bought any gold bricks while there?" No, I didn't. I didn't buy any gold bricks, but jes' es likely es not I may hev a brick bat in my pocket th' nex' time I meet that editor; an' ef I should, I wouldn't wonder ef there'd be an accident er suthin'.

[*Enter* **Taggs** D. F.]

Taggs. Hullo, Uncle Rube.

Rube. Eh? [*Looks around.*] Why, it's Taggs. Where 'd you drop from, Taggs? [*Takes off spectacles and lays them on desk.*]

Taggs. I took a toboggan slide down a load o' hay. Talk about rapid transit!

Rube. You fell off 'n a load o' hay?

Taggs. Naw. I slid off. I shot der chute.

Rube. You'll break yer neck one o' these days.

Taggs. Nixy I won't; no fun in that.

Rube. Are you goin' ter like it here?

Taggs. Ain't I, just!

Rube. Better'n New York?

Taggs. Heaps. I like yous, an' I likes yer grub fer fair. They ain't no Gerry agents here, is they?

Rube. Never hearn tell of any in this neck o' th' woods.

Taggs. C'rect. Say, Uncle Rube, der smooth ole guy is sore on yous, an' it ain't no fairy tale I'm hummin'.

Rube. Hey?

Taggs. His nobs der ole blokie is puttin' it away fer yous, he is fer fair—an' dat's no hot blast.

Rube. Taggs, s'posin' y' talk United States awhile.

Taggs. Wouldn't dat kill yer! Yous ain't up ter date. I mean as how der smoot' ole trolley was blinkin' his gigs—his weepers yer know—*ouch!*

Rube. [*Quietly rises as* **Taggs** *begins speaking, crosses and takes her by the ear.*] Now, ye consarned chatterbox, [*Walks her to chair.*] set down and talk suthin' somebody kin tell suthin' erbout, yer understand? [*Seats her.*]

Taggs. Needn't paralyze a feller.

Rube. Go ahead, 'n' mind yer cross yer t's 'n' dot yer i's.

Taggs. I had me peeps — eyes, y' know — on der deacon. He's got it in fer yous—I mean he's dead set to do you if he has a chance.

Rube. Think so?

Taggs. Sure.

Rube. Guess he's mad erbout suthin'—hoss trade mebbe. I'll know fer sure ef he tries t' make a swop.

Taggs. Ever had a scrap with his jiblets?

Rube. His what-lets?

Taggs. Aw, I mean the Deacon.

Rube. No, him an' me don't scrap much. We only git kinder sassy over 'lection once 'n a while.

[*Enter* **Mrs. Bunn, Milicent** *and* **Gordon** D. F.]

Mrs. B. There he is—you can ask him.

Mil. Uncle Rube——

Rube. Hello, Milly! All come t' town, eh?

Mil. Yes. You see I—we—that is, Mrs. Bunn wants to know—she'll tell you all about it.

Mrs. B. The fact is we thought that—you know—go on, Milly.

Mil. You ask him.

Mrs. B. No, you ask him.

Rube. Ain't gittin' up a church sociable, be you?

Both. Oh, no.

Rube. Glad on 't. Ther last one I went to cost me 'leven dollars fer ice cream 'n' chances t' draw things —'n' all I drawed was a pair o' ten cent mittens 'n' a fit o' cholera morbus.

Mil. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, Uncle Rube!

Rube. 'Twarn't no joke, Milly. The mittens was too small 'n' th' doctor's bill was too big. Say, [*To* **Gordon.**] do you know what these here female women want?

Gor. Yes—just a little informal party at your house next week.

Rube. Is that all?

Mil. Yes. May we?

Rube. Course you can. But it can't be informal, 'cause you'll hev to inform folks about it.

Gor. I mean it won't be a full dress affair.

Rube. Ah, ha—no swaller tail coats ner kid gloves, eh? That's right. I never wore one o' them sawed-off contraptions but once, 'n' then I felt's I was ruther consid'ble of a laundry advertisement. Now you better go over t' the store 'n' git what extra stuff you'll want t' bake with.

Mrs. B All right. Thank you ever so much. [*Exit* D. F.]

Mil. You're just the best, dearest old Uncle Rube that ever lived! [*Runs up, kisses him on the cheek, and exits, quickly,* D. F., *followed by* **Gordon** *and* **Taggs.**]

Rube. [*Stands quietly for a moment, looking at audience in open-mouthed astonishment. Then pats cheek with his fingers.*] Ge-willikins! I ain't so few arter all! I'm glad Mis' Bunn didn't see it. Mis' Bunn 's a charmin' widder, 'n' p'raps some day I'll, [*Pause.*] 'n' p'raps I won't. It's an awful tryin' thing to pop th' question to a widder. I guess I'll go 'n' sample Bill's cider, 'n' think about it. [*Exit* R.]

[*Enter* **Deacon** *and* **Mark** D. F.]

Dea. Nobody here; that's good.

Mark. Now, dad, what are you going to do?

Dea. Ruin ole Rodney—ruin him, ruin him, do you hear?

Mark. Easier said than done, dad.

Dea. No, it ain't.

Mark. He's too sharp.

Dea. No, he isn't. He's on the make same's anybody; and when a man sees a chance to make big money with little risk, he'll bite. I know, for I've been there myself, an' it cost me a lot of money afore I cut my eye teeth.

Mark. That must have been a long time ago, dad.

Dea. You're right, my son. The only time I've been caught in forty year was by old Rodney on a hoss trade, an' I guess I'll even things up now.

Mark. [*Goes up and looks cautiously* R. *and* L.] The coast is clear. Now, what's your scheme. Talk fast.

Dea. He is agent in charge of the big marble quarries, and they're up for sale at a bargain.

Mark. What of that?

Dea. Everything. I'm goin' to buy 'em — ten thousand dollars spot cash, an' I've got the money

right here. [*Produces large envelope.*] Ten one thousand dollar bills.

Mark. Well, and what of that?

Dea. He'll count the money, seal it up, take it up to Rutland and leave it just as it is, in the bank for safe keepin'.

Mark. Great Scott, dad, I don't see——

Dea. Wait a minute. [*In a cautious, half whisper.*] Suppose by some queer accident like, the envelope he deposits should contain nothin' but blank paper when he comes to open it?

Mark. [*Whistles.*] Great scheme. How'll you work it?

Dea. Leave that to me. I've got it all fixed.

Mark. You're a slick one, dad. The "old boy" down below isn't a marker to you.

Dea. [*Tartly.*] Now don't get personal.

Mark. [*Looks* R.] Watch out—he's coming. [*They go up* L. C.]

[*Enter* **Rube** R.]

Rube. That there cider 's got a pretty hefty tang to it. It's durn near vinegar, I guess—er some other temp'rance fluid. [*Goes* C. **Mark** *goes* R.]

Dea. [*Coming down* L.] Good day, Reuben.

Rube. How de do, Deacon? How y' are, Mark?

Mark. Well, thanks. How are you?

Rube. Able t' putter 'round. [*All sit*, **Rube** C.] I see you leggin' it fer home purty fast yes'day. Any bad news?

Dea. No. Your infernal bees got after me.

Rube. Did they sting you?

Dea. Did they? I should say they did.

Rube. They're a mighty disrep'ble lot of insects. Sting anythin'. Even got arter Bub Green—an' I thought that was their limit.

Dea. That fool of a dude from New York upset the hive.

Rube. I know it. Say, he's a caution. This mornin' he got an auger and went t' borin' into one o' my apple trees; an' w'en I asked him what he was doin' he sez he was tappin' the tree fer cider. An' say—a little while arter that he come out with a basket 'n' a ladder lookin' fer the pertater orchard.

Dea. Oh, git out!

Rube. He did fer a fact. He's a circus. Asked Ike if butterflies give butter, 'n' wanted t' know if we raised hops from grasshoppers. It's worth ten cents jes' t' hear him talk 'n' see the clothes he wears.

Dea. Speakin' o' money, Rube, how about that marble quarry?

Rube. She's there, Deacon, waitin' fer a buyer.

Dea. An' won't nuthin' less than ten thousand fetch it?

Rube. Nuthin' less. They wouldn't take nine thousand nine hunnered 'n' ninety-nine dollars' 'n' ninety-nine cents. They're harder 'n nails, them folks. They've sot their price 'n' they won't budge.

Dea. Guess you couldn't work in a swop somehow in part pay?

Rube. No. Wish I could. Might a got rid of it long ago in a swop. But them folks want cash—spot cash on the nail.

Dea. We could talk better if we had a drop to wet our whistles, don't you think?

Rube. Mebbe that's so, I feel kinder like lubricatin'.

Dea. I've heard that our friend's cider is rather—that is—you know—

Rube. Yes—Bill's cider is ruther, you know.

Dea. He wouldn't object?

Rube. Guess not. Ef you kin stand a nip of it Bill won't gig.

Dea. [*Going* R. *with* **Rube.**] Will you come, Mark?

Mark. No, thank you. When I drink I want the real thing. [**Deacon** *exits* R.]

Rube. The real thing? Mark, my boy, there ain't

nuthin' realer anywheres. Bill's cider is a conglomification of Jarsey lightnin', Indianny apple jack, Ohio tanglefoot 'n' ole mountain dew. Better come 'n' sample it.

Mark. No, thanks. And don't let father sample too much of it.

Rube. No danger. I guess the deacon is pizen proof. [*Exits* R.]

Mark. He's right. My beloved parent is a tough citizen; although but few are aware of it. Humbug! It's humbug that wins, and the good deacon is a past master at that.

[*Enter* **Milicent** D. F.]

Mil. [*Speaking as she enters.*] Now, Uncle Rube, we've got everything except——[*Sees* **Mark.**] Oh, I beg pardon.

Mark. Miss Lee—this is a pleasure.

Mil. I thought that Mr. Rodney was here, and,——

Mark. He has just left with my father. If you are going home, may I not have the pleasure of accompanying you?

Mil. Thank you, but I came in with Mrs. Bunn, and——

Mark. And Mr. Gray, I suppose.

Mil. Oh, yes, there was a wagon load of us.

Mark. But I have my own carriage, Miss Lee, and you will find it much easier than the farm wagon.

Mil. Thank you again; but I found the farm wagon, as you call it, no end of fun, and I shall return as I came.

Mark. My usual luck. At least I may sit on the fence and see you drive by?

Mil. [*Amused.*] Yes—you may do that—if you'll be good and not scare the horses. [*They start up.*]

Mark. Am I such a fright?

Mil. Oh, I've seen worse. [*Exeunt, laughing,* D. F.]

[*Enter* **Rube** *and* **Deacon** R.]

Rube. Hem! Wall now, Deacon, s'pose we kinder pick up the stitches where we dropped 'em 'n' go ahead with th' business.

Dea. Very well, Reuben. Business is what I come t' talk. [*They sit at table.*] Now ef I pay you over the ten thousand dollars an' you give me a receipt I guess that binds things, don't it?

Rube. I guess it does. But hadn't you better make a dicker with the owners direct?

Dea. Yes—if you want to lose your commission.

Rube. I ain't hankerin' t' lose it.

Dea. Then here's the money. Count it. [*Gives Rube large envelope containing bills.*] Ten one thousand dollar bills.

Rube. [*Counts aloud.*] Keerect, Deacon. Great grasshoppers! What a snack o' cider that would buy, wouldn't it?

Dea. Shouldn't wonder. Now seal 'er up. [*Rube replaces bills in envelope, which he seals.*] You can deposit it in the bank an' pay it over when the deed is delivered. But first write out the receipt.

Rube. Wall, where's my specs? [*Looks around.*] Oh, there they be. [*Goes to desk and gets spectacles. As he does this the* **Deacon** *pockets the envelope, replacing it with a duplicate. This is observed by* **Taggs**, *who appears at* D F. **Rube** *returns to the table and pockets the envelope.*] How's that receipt to read?

Dea. 'Most anything 'll do. Set down an' I'll tell you. [**Rube** *sits at desk.* **Taggs** *disappears.*]

Rube. Fire away. [*Writes as* **Deacon** *dictates.*]

Dea. "Received of Simon Smailey, ten thousand dollars, same being his money, to pay for the marble quarry of which I am agent. He to have the deed within a week or I return his money. Reuben Rodney." Got it?

Rube. Yep. A week's kinder hurry up, ain't it? Guess I'll go 'n' telegram 'em. Ther boss man o' th'

concern 's 'n Boston, 'n' es you're in such a stew about it I'll hev him up here between a couple o' days.

Dea. All right, Reuben—sooner the better. [*Pockets receipt.*]

Rube. Wall, I'll be off, es th' fly said when he lit on a hot stove. I'll put this here envelope in th' bank fer safe keep, 'n' then send off that there telegraph. So, good day, Deacon. [*Exits* D. F.]

Dea. Good day, Reuben, good day. [*Up* C.] That's right, Reuben, that's right; put it in the bank fer safety. [*Comes down a little.*] They'll take good care of it—an envelope full of blank paper, while I've got the first envelope with the money in it right here, ha, ha, ha! [*Laughs and rubs hands.*] Yes, and the receipt, too. [*Takes receipt from pocket and looks at it.*] The money *and* the receipt. I'll ruin him, ruin him. That's right, Reuben! Ha, ha, ha! Put it in the bank, Reuben, put it in the bank! [*Stands* C., *looking at receipt. Slow music.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Kitchen in the Rodney homestead, in 4th grooves. Doors* L. *in flat*, R. U. E. *and* L. I. E. *See "Scene Plot" for stage settings. Music: "Down on the farm," for rise.*

[*Enter* **Ike** D. F. *with armful of wood, which he places on the floor beside stove.*]

Ike. Gee! Ef th' weather ain't took a sudden flop I d' know. It's come off colder'n blixum. It's a dum sight more like Thanksgivin' time then th' first of October. Goin' t' be a party here t'night, 'n' they're goin' t' play snap 'n' ketch 'em too. Bet they won't ketch me. I'll dig out som'ers. I never was nothin' much when it comes t' kissin' games. [*Exits* L. I. E.]

[*Enter* **Mark** *and* **Milicent** D. F.]

Mark. Am I here ahead of time?

Mil. There was no particular hour named.

Mark. Delightfully rural, isn't it?

Mil. Would you have it anything else? [*Sits* R.]

Mark. I? Oh, no. Country life is delightful, no doubt, to people who are accustomed to it.

Mil. [*Amused.*] Then you should like it.

Mark. But I don't. True, I passed my boyhood here, but I always detested farm life. The same dull routine, day after day—it is enough to drive a man insane.

Mil. It *is* rather quiet.

Mark. In the city there is life, sparkle, pleasure—something to live for—something to arouse one's ambition.

Mil. Yes?

Mark. There is where you should be instead of vegetating here.

Mil. But I am not competent to teach in a city school.

Mark. Teach?

Mil. Why, yes. That's all I'm fitted for.

Mark. Oh, no, it isn't.

Mil. What then?

Mark. You are fitted to shine in society—to grace an assembly—to be a leader among the best of them—to adorn the home of the fortunate man who wins you. [*Pause.*] Miss Lee, Milly, you must know how dear you have grown to me. Let me take you out of this dull life, this daily round of hard, thankless toil. Be my wife, Milly, and you shall never regret it.

Mil. [*Rising.*] I thank you sincerely, Mr. Smailey, but I cannot accept your offer.

Mark. And why not? You shall have everything that money can buy, and you will find life in the city far different from what it is here.

Mil. But I am perfectly satisfied here.

Mark. And perhaps you prefer that beggarly artist.

Mil. You are forgetting yourself. Remember, please, that Mr. Gray is a gentleman.

Mark. Does he say that I am not?

Mil. He has never done you the honor of mentioning your name in my presence.

Mark. Then it's old Rodney, eh? Well, that old hayseed won't be so flip when he finds that that ten thousand dollars——

Rube. [*Who has entered* D. F. *on above speech.*] Well, what about that air ten thousand dollars?

Mark. Eh? Oh—n-nothing, only the week is up to-day.

Rube. Yas, 'n' I s'pose th' feller from Boston 's up t' Rutland, 'n' hes got th' money by this time.

Mark. Has he? Then of course everything is all right.

Rube. Yas. This here old hayseed, es you call him, ginerally means t' be jest erbout all right. Say, Mark, you look kinder riled up 'bout suthin'. Ain't got th' toothache, be you?

Mark. No, thank you.

Rube. Glad on it. [*Goes* R.] We're goin' t' cut some capers here bime by, 'n' you're welcome t' stay ef you won't look so dumbed grumpy. [*Exit* R. U. E.]

Mil. [*Starts up* R.] If you will excuse me——

Mark. Just a moment. [*She pauses.*] Won't you please sit down?

Mil. I really wish that you would excuse me.

Mark. I will be brief. Just give me a few moments.

Mil Well. [*Sits as before.*]

Mark. I presume I was too abrupt. Perhaps I should not have spoken yet. But my love for you was so sincere, so wholly unselfish, that I felt I must do so. I am truly sorry if I spoke too soon. And I must tell you that——

Rube. [*Entering* R. U. E.] Excuse me fer interruptin', but I jest happened t' think o' suthin'. Say, d'

you think th' deacon 'll be likely t' drop in fer a spell t'night?

Mark. I can't say.

Rube. Wish he would, b' gee! I'd like—ha, ha, ha!—I'd like t' git him into a game o' snap 'n' ketch 'em! [*Exit* R. U. E.]

Mil. Is there anything more?

Mark. Yes. Do you dislike me?

Mil. No, I do not. Why should I?

Mark. Then why are you in such haste to get away?

Mil. Because I——oh, because you seem unwilling to accept my answer as final.

Mark. So I am. I want you to take a sober second thought before you decide. You are born to a higher life than teaching these thick headed country dolts.

Mil. You attended the school where I teach, did you not?

Mark. Yes, but I——

Mil. Were you one of those country dolts?

Mark. I don't see the application.

Mil. Indeed?

Mark. I hope you don't class me with the young bucolics of this neighborhood.

Mil. No, I do not; for some of our noblest men and women came from the farms, and were educated in our little country schools.

Mark. Thank you.

Mil. Oh, I'm not speaking of you, Mr. Smailey. [*Crosses* L.] The boys I teach have not had your city polish; but what they lack in that they make up in true nobility and genuine manhood! [*Exit* L. 1 E.]

Mark. [*Looking after her.*] I don't believe that she is particularly smitten with me. Blast the luck! And that mining property of hers is worth an immense fortune—only she doesn't know it. That is why my excellent old dad wants me to marry her. Perhaps he isn't as rich as he pretends. I believe I can thank old Rodney for her refusal. I'd like to wring his confounded neck!

[*Enter* **Rube** R. U. E.]

Rube. What chicken are you talkin' of now, Mark?

Mark. No chicken at all—just a turkey buzzard.

Rube. That so? Wall now, I guess a turkey buzzard's neck 's kinder apt t' be tough. Say, Mark, you're actin' like a dog with a sore head. What's wrong, anyhow?

Mark. It's none of your affair, is it?

Rube. No, sonny, it ain't, sure enough.

Mark. Then if you attend to your own business you will be better off.

Rube. [*Restraining himself.*] Good night, 'n' be quick about it.

Mark. Bah! I'd like to smack your face! [*Steps up to Rube. They look at each other for an instant, then clinch, and Mark is thrown.*]

Rube. Y' see, it didn't work. Funny you never larned how t' rassle.

Mark. [*Rising.*] I'll square accounts with you later.

Rube. Then I may 's well hev good measure. [*Opens* D. F., *then runs Mark up and kicks him out. Hurry music during this.*] There, b' gee! Ef I hadn't a done that I'd lost my temper, 'n' then somebody 'd a got hurt. [*Exit* R. U. E.]

[*Enter* **Mrs. Bunn** *and* **Taggs** L.]

Mrs. B. Now, Taggs, you want to fly around. [*Goes up and puts wood in stove.*]

Taggs. All right, auntie. [*Flaps her arms, runs about, then jumps upon chair and crows.*]

Mrs B. Land sakes alive, Taggs! What are you doing?

Taggs. Flyin'. [*Crows, then jumps down.*]

Mrs. B. Well, of all the crazy—here, go fill the tea kettle.

Taggs. Cert. [*Takes tea kettle from stove, meets* **Upson** *at* D. F. *Gives him kettle.*] Here, go fill this.

Up. Yas—what with?

Taggs. Water. W-a-t, wat, t-a-r, ter, water.

Up. Eh? What kind——

Taggs. The wet kind, nummy. Dry water ain't any good. Do hurry up.

Up. Yas. [*Exits* D. F., *very slowly.*]

Mrs. B. See if them biscuits are done.

Taggs. [*Looks in oven.*] They smell doneish.

Mrs. B. [*Putting spread on table.*] Well, put 'em in the pantry.

Taggs. [*Draws out pan and drops it.*] Wow!

Mrs. B. Land sakes! What now?

Taggs. [*Waving hands rapidly.*] I—burned—my—fingers!

Mrs. B. Use your apron, child. [**Taggs** *does so, picking up pan, and exits* R. U. E.]

Up [*Entering with tea kettle,* D. F.] Here's the water.

Mrs. B. Thank you. Put it on the stove.

Up. [*Does so.*] All right. Had some trouble to get it.

Mrs. B. [*Placing dishes on table.*] How was that?

Up. There was a cow there getting a dwink, and she objected, you know.

Mrs. B. *What!* You got that at the water trough?

Up. Why, yas—she said——

Mrs. B. Oh-h! Take it out and empty it—quick!

Up. But I cawn't see why I should. [*Down* L.]

Mrs. B. I'll show you why. [*Grabs broom and hits him. He runs up, crosses to* R. *shouting* "STOP! GET OUT! MURDER! FIRE! POLICE!" *As he passes* R. U. E., *she strikes at him but hits* **Rube**, *who enters carrying dish of potato salad.*]

Rube. Christopher Columbus! There ain't no flies on me. [*Puts salad on table.*] Ef I'd a dropped this here petater salad I'd a said suthin' sure 's guns.

Mrs. B. He filled the tea kettle at the horse trough.

Rube. Wall, don't tell th' hosses. [Upson *exits* D. F.]

Mrs. B. We'll never get supper at this rate.

Rube. Oh, yes, we will. [*Goes to stove.*] This here teapot's full o' hot water already. So we had all this old rumpus f'r nuthin'.

Mrs. B. Anyway, you needn't be cross, Reuben Rodney.

Rube. Cross, Maria? Was I ever cross with you?

Mrs. B. No, nor with anybody else. You're the best natured man living, and I'm an ugly old crank, so there!

Rube. It wouldn't be healthy weather for any man t' say that, 'f I happened t' be loppin' 'round in his neighborhood.

Mrs. B. Would you care?

Rube. Care? Jumpin' polliwogs! Care? Why, Maria, there ain't nuthin' this side o' kingdom come that I care fer 's much 's I—[*Catches her eye, pauses; aside.*] Oh, beeswax! [*Crosses.*]

Mrs. B. [*Aside.*] Land o' Goshen! What was he going to say?

Rube. Maria, you won't git mad 'n' think I'm an old fool ef I tell you a little story, will you?

Mrs. B. I'm sure I won't.

Rube. Then come here 'n' set down.

Mrs. B. Wait till I put the tea a-steeping.

Rube. All right. [*She gets tea caddy from cupboard.*]

Mrs. B. [*Putting in the tea.*] You won't be long, will you? Supper's about ready.

Rube. No, I'll boil it down. [*She comes down, they sit* R.] Now, Maria, I jes' want to say—[*She looks at him.*] Wait a minute. [*Goes to cupboard, puts several ears of pop corn in a pan, resumes seat and shells the corn while speaking.*] It's about a boy.

Mrs. B. [*Disappointed.*] Oh! I thought it was about a man.

Rube. He is a man now, but he had t' be a boy at th' beginnin'.

Mrs. B. Well, go on, Reuben. [*Soft music through following speech.*]

Rube. Yes. Now once upon a time, es they say in th' story books, there was a boy—jes' an ord'nary freckle-faced, stub-toed runt of a boy. When he was a little shaver, 'bout knee high to a grasshopper, his folks died, 'n' he had t' hump t' take care of his little sisters. So he hadn't much chance t' learn grammar ner th' ways o' fine society; 'n' as fer gals—they was a conundrum t' him.

Mrs. B. And he gave them up?

Rube. That's what he did. [*They move their chairs nearer.*] When he got to be a man it was the same thing, till all of a sudden he saw a light.

Mrs. B. What kind of a light, Reuben? [*Both move nearer.*]

Rube. A matrimonial light—I b'lieve they call it th' torch of Hyman er suthin'.

Mrs. B. Who carries it?

Rube. A widder. [*Shells corn vigorously.*]

Mrs. B. Oh!

Rube. Yes; 'n' say, that ole skeezicks of a feller's more 'n fifty year old.

Mrs. B. That's just in the prime of life.

Rube. Think so?

Mrs. B. Why, yes. Besides she's most forty.

Rube. Then d' you think—[*Pauses, shells corn faster.*]

Mrs. B. Yes——

Rube. She'd have him?

Mrs. B. He might ask her.

Rube. Durn it, I will! I'm the feller, you're th' widder, 'n' what do you say?

Mrs. B. I say yes.

Rube. Hooray! [*Embraces her and spills the corn.*] Jumpin' caterpillars! [*Both rise.*]

[*Enter* **Taggs** R., **Upson** D. F., **Gordon** *and* **Milicent** L.]

Mrs. B. Well, I never! [*Goes up, gets broom and dust pan.*]

Rube. [*Crosses to* **Gordon.**] Y' see it was jest like this.

Gor. That was just what I thought.

Mrs. B. Here, Taggs. [*Gives her the dust pan to hold while she sweeps up the corn.*] If ever there was a clumsy man!

Gor. I congratulate you. When does it come off?

Rube. [*Bashfully.*] Oh, shucks! Get out!

Taggs. Uncle Rube said he'd be my father, an' now I'm gittin' a mother, too. Hooray! [*Goes up, puts dust pan on table, and broom beside cupboard.*]

Mrs. B. Well, if ever I——

Mil. [*Who has been up* C., *now comes down and kisses her, speaking in dumb show.*]

Gor. [*Aside to* **Rube.**] I'm in the same boat.

Rube. [*Pointing with thumb over shoulder towards Milicent.*]

Gor. Yes—we're engaged.

Rube. Put 'er thar! [*Shakes* **Gordon's** *hands vigorously.*] We'll all git married t'gether, b' gosh! Come now, let's hurry up supper.

Mil. Can I help?

Rube. No, siree. You 'n' Gor set down 'n' talk. Me 'n' Taggs 'n' Maria 'll 'tend t' th' grub.

Mrs. B. We're only having a light supper.

Rube. There's other things t' foller. Y' might finish shellin' th' corn, though. [*Sees dust pan on table.*] Hey, Taggs! I want my fodder ground! [**Taggs** *takes pan from table and exits* R. U. E. *Re-enters with biscuits, which she places on table. Then she and* **Mrs. Bunn** *bring on pie, cake, butter, sugar, milk, etc.* **Rube** *brings pan of corn to* **Gordon** *and* **Milicent**, *who are seated* R. *front.*] Now go ahead a shell, 'n' ef you find a red ear, you know what. [*Goes up.*]

Mil. What does he mean about a red ear?

Gor. I don't know. Perhaps it's good luck to find one.

Rube. Hear that now! Ef thar ain't a couple o' greenies! Plain t' see you two ain't farmers.

Gor. Well, what does it mean?

Rube. Shall we show 'em, Maria?

Mrs. B. What?

Rube. Shall we show 'em what it means t' find a red ear o' corn?

Mrs. B. Right before folks? I guess not.

Rube. All right. I'm kinder bashful myself.

Mil. But what is it?

Rube. Want t' know real bad?

Mil. Certainly I do.

Gor. Of course we do.

Rube. Wall then, it means t' git suthin' that you kin give away by the million 'n' still hev jest es many left es you had at fust. [*Goes up.*]

Gor. I know what he means.

Mil. What?

Gor. This. [*Draws her to him and kisses her.*]

Taggs. Spoons!

Rube. There's spoons on the table already. Come, come! [*Bustles about.*] Have I got to get supper all by myself? [*All laugh.*]

Mrs. B. Now do listen to that man!

[*Enter* **Bub Green** D. F.]

Bub. Howdy du, ever'body.

Rube. Why, how air ye, Bub? Jest in time fer a snack o' supper.

Bub. Guess I be. Eatin' allers agrees with me.

Mrs B. Supper's ready.

Taggs. [*Takes tin pan and drums on it.*] Supper! Supper! Supper!

Rube. Hold yer noise. This ain't no railroad station. Now set by ever'body. [**Rube** *sits at head of table, facing the audience.* **Mrs. Bunn** *sits at his right hand,* **Gordon** *next to her, then* **Milicent.** **Bub** *at foot of table, back to audience,* **Taggs** *next, then* **Upson.** *The seat at* **Rube's** *left hand is vacant.*]

Mrs. B. Why, where's Ike?

Rube. I dunno. [*Calls.*] Ike! Ike! I—ke!

Ike. [*Off* L. I. E.] What you want?

Rube. Come in here. [**Ike** *enters* L. I. E.] Come on. Supper's ready.

Ike. I'd ruther wait.

Rube. Ye would, eh? [*Goes to* **Ike**, *takes him by the collar and seats him.*] Now, then, ever'body help yourselves, 'n' ef y' don't see what y' want, sing out. Will you pour out th' tea, Maria? [*Business of eating is continued during the following speeches.*]

Bub. I want mine powerful sweet.

Mrs. B. All right.

Taggs. [*To* **Bub**, *who is eating voraciously.*] Say, how much kin yous eat w'en yer pushed?

Bub. [*With his mouth full.*] Much's—I—kin—git.

Taggs. Yous a bird.

Bub. I—ugh—ugh! [*Chokes, starts to rise and tumbles over.* **Rube** *and* **Gordon** *pick him up.* **Rube** *slaps his back.*]

Rube. Don't need t' hurry, Bub. Got all night t' eat in, an' there ain't no train t' ketch.

Bub. She made me talk.

Rube. Taggs, don't do that any more. Bub can't talk and eat too. Some folks is built that way. [*All sit.*] Speakin' of eatin' reminds me of Hank Jimson. He's runnin' a hotel down in Maine. I was over t' his place last spring. Had four kinds o' meat fer dinner—lamb, ram, sheep 'n' mutton. An' say, they had five kinds o' pie—pie, apple pie, cold pie, warm pie, 'n' hot pie.

Bub. Gee! Wish I'd a ben in your place!

Rube. Say, Gord, ef you 'n' Milly 'll pay more attention t' supper 'n' less t' each other you'll git more grub.

Gor. We're doing well, thank you.

Rube. Take pattern by me 'n' Maria. She's jes' dyin' t' have me hug her, 'n' so 'm I, but dumbed 'f I'll do it.

Mrs. B. Reuben Rodney!

Ike. Say, I fergot t' tell you thet w'en I wus bringin' thet package o' tea home th' paper busted an' I guess some terbacker got mixed in with it. [*Continues eating. All the others stop suddenly, and lean back in their chairs. Pause.*]

Rube. [*Slowly and distinctly.*] Isaac, is there any pertickler way in which you'd like ter die?

Ike. Now, Rube, I——

Rube. Ef you've any choice, speak right up 'n' we'll try 'n' a'comerdate.

Mrs. B. Never mind, folks. I didn't use any of that tea. I had a drawin' left over.

Rube. That saves you, Ike. But I'll charge that air pound o' tea up t' you—I will, b' gee!

Ike. Then I'll hafter mix it with my terbacker 'n' smoke it.

Rube. Good idea, too. Be an improvement on what you giner'ly smoke.

Gor. When you were in New York, did you go to the theatre, Uncle Rube?

Rube. Wall, no. I did calkerlate on goin', but I changed my mind.

Gor. How was that?

Rube. Y' see, one evenin' I was walkin' along with a feller I knowed, 'n' he said: "Let's drop in to Keith's." I s'posed Keith was a friend o' hissen, so in we went. It were a big room with seats kinder roundin', 'n' th' floor pinted down some. Way at th' tother end was a settin' room, 'n' jes' es we got sot down an old feller who were in th' settin' room begun t' tell a mighty pretty gal 'bout how he seen a theatre.

Gor. What did he say?

Rube. I can't remember it all, but th' pint was thet he'd been t' see a theatre th' night afore. Said it were a purty nice theatre—covered th' whole side o' the wall. Said th' folks must a liked it, fer they begun ter clap 'n' stamp, 'n' then a whole passle o' fellers come up outer th' cellar 'n' begun t' fiddle like all creation.

Mil. That was the orchestra.

Rube. Yes, he 'lowed it might a ben. Then he said all of a sudden th' durn theatre went right up through th' roof; an' there were a room behind it, 'n' some folks come in 'n' begun t' talk 'bout things thet didn't consarn him, so he got up 'n' went out. So thinks, sez I, ef thet's what a theatre is, I won't invest.

Gor. But you were in a theatre then.

Rube. Git out!

Gor. Yes, you were. And the "old" man you saw was Arthur Sidman, the comedian, a young fellow about my age.

Rube. Now look here, Gord; maybe I might be in a theatre 'thout knowin' it; but I guess I know th' difference twixt you 'n' a grizzled old geezer like him. [*A knock at* D. F.] Hark! Is that somebody knockin'? [*Knock repeated.*] Visitors, I guess. [*Opens door.*] Come in. [*Turns to the others.*] It's Bill Tappam. Come in, Bill. What made y' stop t' knock? [**Tappam** *enters, keeps hat on, hands in pocket of overcoat, and comes slowly down.*] Take off yer coat 'n' hev some supper.

Tap. No, thankee, Rube. [*Down* L. *front.*]

Rube. [*Comes down.*] What's th' matter, Bill? Any o' yer folks sick? [**Deacon** *enters* D. F. *Remains near door.*]

Tap. No. [**Gordon** *and* **Milicent** *rise and come down* R. *front.* **Bub** *rises and goes up* R. **Taggs, Upson** *and* **Ike** *go up* L. **Mrs. Bunn** *rises and stands beside table.* **Taggs** *exits* D. F.]

Rube. But suthin' hes gone wrong, Bill. Tell me what it is, old friend. Y' know y' kin count on me.

Tap. Say, Rube, y' won't blame me?

Rube. Blame you, Bill? What fer? That dog o' yourn hain't been killin' my sheep, hes he?

Tap. No.

Rube. Then fer th' love o' land, what ails y'?

Tap. I argified with him, Rube. I said prob'ly

yu'd break his dum'd head, 'n' serve him right. But ef I didn't do it he'd a got somebody else.

Rube. Bill, what on arth are y' talkin' 'bout?

Bill. [*Sees* Deacon.] Here, Deacon, come 'n' tell yer own story. Blam'd 'f I'm goin' t'.

Dea. [*Down extreme* L.] It's simple enough. [*Harshly.*] That deal for the marble quarry's off.

Rube. I don't care 'f it is.

Dea. You orter, though. The Boston man come up, an' everything was all right—papers made out an' all that. But when the banker handed out the envelope all sealed up jus' es you got it——

Rube. Wall, what?

Dea. There wasn't a cent in it—nuthin' only blank paper.

Rube. What!

Dea. That's just what. I seen 'em open it with my own eyes, an' there wasn't a cent in it.

Rube. But I put it in myself.

Dea. What o' that? It ain't there now. So I'll trouble you fer the ten thousand dollars, Reuben.

Rube. Now, Deacon, y' know I ain't got it.

Dea. No, I don't. But I *do* know I've got yer receipt fer my money—mine—ter be returned me t'-day unless the sale was made.

Rube. Good heavens 'n' arth, Deacon, y' don't suppose——

Dea. I'm not supposin' anythin'. I want my money, but I won't be mean about it. If you've lost it you kin turn this here farm an' what other property you have over t' me, an' I'll call it square.

Rube. Afore I'd do that I'd see y' buried head furst in th' mud t' yer shoe tops.

Dea. You would, eh? Very well—I'm done. Bill, do yer duty. [**Bill** *turns away and goes up stage a little.*]

Rube. [*Pauses, looks at* **Deacon.**] What d' you mean by that, Deacon? [*Pause.*] Come, now, speak up. What does it mean?

Dea. [*Comes to* **Rube.**] What does it mean? Wall, I'll tell you. [*Savagely.*] When I found my money was gone I suspicioned you might run away with it. So I swore out a warrant to arrest you, an' Bill's got it.

Rube. [*As if dazed.*] A warrant to arrest me?

Mrs. B. Don't you let him do it, Joshua. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Deacon Smailey—and you, too, Bill Tappam. [*Very soft, plaintive music until end.*]

Rube. Don't blame Bill, Maria. Bill feels es mean 's I do.

Mil. [*Crosses to* **Rube** *and embraces him.*] Uncle Rube, I know you didn't do it; and I——[*Bows her head on his arm.*]

Rube. So do I, Milly. But, there, don't cry.

Gor. Can I do anything?

Rube. No, thankee, Gordon. There, Milly. [*She returns to* **Gordon.**] Well, Bill; [*Pause.*] I'm yer prisiner, I s'pose, 'n' I'm ready t' go.

Dea. You better put the handcuffs on him, Bill.

Rube. What? Handcuff me? [*Seizes* **Deacon** *by the throat and shakes him violently.*] Y' dirty, pizen rattlesnake! If I don't have you behind th' bars in forty-eight hours, there ain't no Yankee blood left in my gizzard! [*Flings him down. Music: Quick march.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*Same as Act II. Lively music at rise.*

[*Enter* **Taggs** *and* **Upson** L.]

Taggs. Come along, Upsy.

Up. Yas—but me name——

Taggs. Oh, shoot yer name. Say, nibs, I never seen a court run so, did you?

Up. I nevah saw any court, ye knaw, except a tennis court.

Taggs. Ah, git out——say, wasn't you never run in?

Up. Run in what?

Taggs. Wouldn't that kill yer! Why, run in by a cop—pinched, see?

Up. You mean awested?

Taggs. Sure, Mike.

Up. Good gwacious, no.

Taggs. Well, yous too good fer any use. Say, I'd like ter git a soak at dat old pill box of a deacon. Tryin' ter git Uncle Rube held fer swipin' his cash. An' settin' so oily an' smoot', an' sanctimonicus.

Up. Yas—he did look that way. Say, Miss Taggs, do you know, I weally think the deacon is a wegular old—old dayvil—there, now!

Taggs. [*Slaps his back.*] Hurrah for yous! Say, nibs, dot justice wot's der main guy give me der run out; but if he holds Uncle Rube fer de Grand Jury as dat old deacon wants him to, I'll tell a spiel wot'll make his hair curl.

Up. Yas? What is it?

Taggs. Never you mind. I'm nex' ter a good thing. [*Nudges him.*] Yous 'll find out.

Up. Yas—only I object to being called a "thing."

Taggs. [*Aside.*] Ain't he cute!

[*Enter* **Milicent** *and* **Mrs. Bunn** D. F.]

Mrs. B. What are they doing now, Taggs?

Taggs. Chewin' der same old string.

Mrs. B. Is that mean old Deacon Smailey in there?

Taggs. Sure.

Mrs. B. Who would believe anything he says?

Taggs. Give us an easy one.

Mrs. B. Well, I'm going to see what's going on. [*Goes* L.]

Taggs. Yous'll git a run out. [**Milicent** *sits* R.]

Mrs. B. Run me out? Well, I should like to see them try it! [*Exits* L.]

Taggs. Come on, Upsy. Let's go out an' do a cake walk 'roun der block. [*Comic walk with* **Upson** *and exit* D. F.]

Mil. [*Taking letter from envelope.*] I don't understand this letter. [*Reads.*] "Miss Lee: Your letter instructing us to sell certain of your mining stock was duly received. As the mines in question are very valuable, and are certain to increase in value, we took the liberty of advancing you the required amount. We trust it was satisfactory, and should you desire a further remittance, please advise. The property has more than quadrupled in value during the past year, and we assure you that it would be very unwise to sell at present." This is very strange. I wrote no such letter and have received no money.

[*Enter* **Mark**, D. F.]

Mark. Good morning, Miss Lee.

Mil. [*Coolly.*] Good morning, sir.

Mark. "Sir?" Why do you treat me so icily? Have I forfeited your regard?

Mil. I am not aware that I had any regard, as you term it, for you to forfeit.

Mark. You admitted that you did not dislike me.

Mil. So I did.

Mark. Then if you do not dislike me——

Mil. Please pardon me, Mr. Smailey, but really there is no occasion for personalities. We are merely acquaintances. Let it end at that.

Mark. Do you blame me for what my father is doing?

Mil. Certainly not—unless you are a party to it.

Mark. I don't understand.

Mil. Very well.

Mark. Do you think that my father——[*Pauses.*]

Mil. [*Looks at him.*] Well?

Mark. Is playing an underhand game?

Mil. I do not believe that Uncle Rube had that money.

Mark. Then who did? He put it in the envelope and sealed it himself. The seal had not been tampered with, and yet the money was missing.

Mil. I think that that can be explained.

Mark. Indeed! In what way?

Mil. That is to be ascertained.

Mark. [*Sneeringly.*] Perhaps Mr. Gordon Gray can do that.

Mil. Perhaps he can.

Mark. If that beggar dares insinuate——

Mil. [*Rising.*] Mr. Gray is not a beggar. He is a gentleman who earns an honest living—an example which some other—persons—would do well to follow. [*Bows and turns up stage.*]

Mark. Excuse me—just a word.

Mil. [*Facing him.*] Excuse *me*—but I have no desire to converse with you.

Mark. No? I suppose you prefer a fellow like this Mr. Gordon Gray. [*Turns away.*]

Mil. [*Comes down.*] And supposing I do—what then?

Mark. [*Shrugs shoulders.*] Oh, nothing.

Mil. Does it concern you in any manner?

Mark. Oh dear, no; only this Gordon Gray——

Gor. [*Entering* D. F.] Well, what about him?

Mark. So—playing the spy, were you?

Gor. [*Conducts* **Milicent** R.] I want a few words in private with this person. [Mark *is* L.]

Mil [*Half amused.*] Don't let him hurt you, Gordon.

Gor. Never fear. [*She exits* R. U. E.] Now, sir: [C.] In military life we respect a spy, for he risks his life in serving his country; but in civil life a spy is a most contemptible sneak. Now do you call me a spy?

Mark. And what if I do?

Gor. [*Steps up to him, speaks slowly.*] Do you call me a spy?

Mark. Yes, blast you: [**Gordon** *knocks him down. He springs to his feet and rushes at* **Gordon**, *who knocks him down again.*]

[*Enter* **Ike**, *quickly*, L.]

Ike. Hurrah, hurrah, hur—[*Tumbles over* **Mark.**] rah! Say, [*Rises.*] what's th' row? [**Milicent** *enters* R., *comes down* R.]

Gor. We had a little one.

Ike. I want t' know! An' y' knocked him sensible, eh? Git up, now. [**Mark** *rises, goes up* L.] Th' Justice said ther' wasn't no case agin Rube, so it's dismissed.

Gor. Good! [**Milicent** *claps her hands. Lively music.*]

[*Enter* **Mrs. Bunn** *and* **Tappam** L. *She crosses to* **Milly** *and kisses her.* **Rube** *enters* L., **Taggs** *and* **Upson** D. F.]

Gor. Three cheers for Uncle Rube. [*All but* **Mark** *cheer*, **Rube** *meanwhile shaking hands all around.*]

[*Enter* **Deacon** L.]

Rube. Much obleeged ever'body.

Tap. I'm glad it didn't amount t' anythin'.

Dea. It didn't, eh? Well, where's that ten thousand dollars gone to? That's what I want t' know.

Rube. [C.] Yes, Deacon Smailey, [*Very distinctly.*] an' that's jes' what we're goin' t' find out. [*The others applaud.*]

Dea. Well, find out. Meanwhile I'll hunt up another Justice.

Rube. Meanwhile you'll stay right here.

Dea. What do you mean?

Rube. I mean thet I'm a-holdin' court right here myself. [*Others applaud, crying "Good!" etc.*]

Dea. Well, hold yer old court. It don't interest me.

Rube. Can't spare y' jes' yet—so set down.

Taggs. [*Loudly.*] Ain't ye glad yer come? [**Deacon** *sits* L. *front.* **Rube** *brings stand to* C. *and sits behind it, facing audience. Others sit* R. *and* L.]

Rube. This here court 'll come t' order. Taggs, keep yer feet still 'n' stop chawin' gum.

Taggs. Can't do both ter onct, Uncle Rube.

Rube. You must. [*Writes on slips of paper.*]

Taggs. Oh, say, Uncle Rube——

Rube. Stop Uncle Reubin' me. You're in court now —I'm "your Honor," 'n' I won't be joshed. [*Writes.*]

Up. Yas—you mustn't josh now, Taggs.

Tap. Silence in th' court!

Rube. [*Hands slips to* **Tappam.**] Give this t' Mark 'n' th' other t' th' deacon. [**Tappam** *does so.*] Deacon, you 'n' Mark air summoned es witnesses.

Dea. Witnesses fer what?

Rube. Fer an examination I'm goin' t' hold.

Mark. [*Comes down.*] An examination?

Rube. Yes, sir.

Mark. On what?

Rube. On some durn crooked work.

Mark. I don't know anything about your crooked work.

Rube. P'raps not; but I want t' know suthin' about some other people's.

Mark. I shan't testify.

Rube. I—guess—you—will. Set down till you're wanted. Now, then, Deacon, step up here 'n' kiss th' book.

Dea. I refuse to answer.

Rube. Y' do, hey? Then I'll send y' t' jail fer contempt o' court 'n' keep y' there till y' do answer.

Taggs. Hooray! An' der band played Annie Laurie!

Rube. Taggs, ef you interrupt this here court agin, this here court 'll play tag with you, 'n' you'll be "it."

Up. Now will you be good?

Rube. Well, Deacon, which is it?

Dea. I ain't afraid. [*Comes to table.*]

Rube. Raise yer right hand. Y' swear t' tell th' truth, th' whole truth 'n' nuthin' else but th' truth?

Kiss th' book. [*He does so.*] Gord, y' write shorthand, I b'lieve.

Gor. I do.

Rube. Then, will y' take down this testimony?

Gor. With pleasure. [*Sits at desk and writes.*]

Rube. Now, Deacon, was th' ten thousand dollars y' paid me yer own money?

Dea. I don't see ——

Rube. Answer my question.

Dea. Well—yes.

Rube. Where d' you git it?

Dea. I refuse t' answer.

Rube. D' know 's I blame y', Deacon. Arter I put th' money in th' envelope 'n' sealed it up, did y' tech it?

Dea. Of course not.

Rube. Swear t' that?

Dea. Certainly I do.

Taggs. [*Rises.*] Say, Uncle Rube—yer Honor——

Rube. Set down, Taggs. [*She sits.*] That'll do fer th' present. [**Deacon** *returns to his seat.*] Now, Mark, I want a leetle confabulation with you. Raise your right hand. [*Rapidly.*] Y'-swear-t'-tell-th'-truth-th' whole - truth - 'n' - nuthin' - else - but - th' - truth - kiss-th' - book. [*He does so.*] Y' said last night thet I wouldn't be so flip when I found out erbout th' ten thousand dollars. What d' you mean by that air speech?

Mark. Why—I—I told you then that the week was up.

Rube. Y' knew nuthin' else, eh?

Mark. No, I didn't.

Rube. All right. That's all. [**Mark** *joins* **Deacon.**] Now, Taggs, I'll just ask——

Taggs. [*Jumps up, raises both hands, speaks rapidly.*] I'll tell der whole troot an' nuthin' else s'welp me, John Rogers! [*Runs to table and kisses book.*]

Rube. Ef you're runnin' th' court, Taggs, I'll absquatulate.

Taggs. I only wanted ter swear what I seen dat old trolley do.

Rube. Go ahead then.

Taggs. A week ago yous an' dat old sag wop was here. Yous went to der desk ter git yer glims——

Rube. Git what?

Taggs. Yer glims—yer gogs—glasses.

Rube. Y' mean my specs—wall, go on.

Taggs. Soon's yer back was turned dat old ice cart swipes a big envelope as lays on der table, an' truns down a diff, wot yous picked up.

Rube. Pocketed th' envelope, hey, 'n' put down a different one?

Taggs. Dat's der size of it.

Dea. [*Rising.*] That's a lie!

Taggs. Wot? [*Runs to* **Deacon**, *grabs him by coat collar, pushes him back into chair, and shakes him violently while speaking.*] Yous puts a lie on me? Eh? Eh? Eh? Eh? [**Mark** *grabs her arm.* **Rube** *runs down and flings* **Mark** *aside, picks* **Taggs** *up, carries her across stage, and places her in chair.*]

Rube. Now, y' little wild cat, set still. [*Turns away.*]

Taggs. Call me a liar, will he? [*Makes another dash at* **Deacon**, *but* **Rube** *turns just in time to catch her in his arms. Puts her back into chair.*]

Rube. Ef you git up again, I'll tie y' down.

Mark. [*To* **Deacon.**] We better get out. [*They start.*]

Rube. [*Stopping them.*] Don't be oneasy, Deacon. I've got a few remarks t' make. Deacon, when I buy a hoss of a rascal, I examine that hoss mighty keerful. Now, a week ago, when I sealed up that air envelope I made a smudge on it; but th' one I picked up didn't hev no smudge. So, thinks I, guess I'll see 'bout this, 'n' Bill 'n' me onsealed it 'n' found nuthin' but blank paper. We said nuthin', but we sawed wood. We went t' th' bank, told th' cashier, 'n' then let things run their course. Now, how d' y' feel?

L. of C.

Taggs. He feels rocky!

Dea. Well, Reuben, I—I—I'll give ye the ten thousand dollars if ye'll say no more about it.

Rube. Give it t' me? Why, y' mean, pizen dog! Give it t' th' gal y' stole it from, 'long with th' rest of her property.

Mil. Why, Uncle Rube——

Rube. It's a fact, Milly. He forged yer name 'n' raised th' money on yer minin' stock. Bill, take this rattlesnake 'n' lock him up till we see what th' Gran' Jury 'll hev t' say. As fer you, [*To* **Mark.**] you've been walkin' on thin ice 'n' I advise y' t' keep on shore arter this.

Mil. Uncle Rube—I don't want the man locked up.

Rube. But he wanted t' lock me up—dum him!

Mil. I know, but as a favor to me, please let him go.

Rube. Wall, when a gal wuth a million dollars er more asks a favor, I s'pose that settles it. Bill, you'n Ike go hum with th' deacon 'n' git ther money 'n' whatever else he hes b'longin' t' Milly. [**Bill, Ike, Deacon** *and* **Mark** *exit* D. F.] Good, shake. [*They shake hands.*] You're mos' es sweet a gal 's ever drapped into old Varmount, 'n' a millionairess t' boot. An say, [*To audience.*] ther 's goin' t' be a double weddin' over t' my house pritty dum soon quick. You 'n' all th' folks air invited t' come 'n' put in a pleasant evenin' with Uncle Rube.

CURTAIN.

[*Music: "Yankee Doodle," quick time.*]

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AMY HALSTEAD, her sister, two years younger, fond of frolic....

INEZ GRAY, a young lady visitor willing to share in the fun....

MRS. HALSTEAD, a widow, and stepmother to the Halstead girls.

HANNAH MARY BARNES, or "Sis," a maiden lady who keeps house for her brother.....

DWIGHT BRADLEY, a fortune hunter and Mrs. Halstead's son by a former marriage.....

DR. BURTON, a young physician.....

SAMMY, the darky bell-boy in the Halstead house.....

ABRAHAM BARNES, or "Bub," a yankee farmer still unmarried at forty—a diamond in the rough.....

ATTORNEY; SHERIFF.....

Time of playing, two hours.

Two interior scenes. Modern costumes.

SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENTS:

ACT I. Parlor of the Halstead home. The young doctor. The three girls plot to make his acquaintance. An affection of the heart. "Easy to fool a young doctor," but not so easy after all. The stepmother and her son. The stolen diamonds. The missing will. Plot to win Bernice. "I would not marry Dwight Bradley for all the wealth the world contains." Driven from home.

ACT. II. Kitchen of the Barnes' farm house, Bub takes off his boots. The new school ma'am. "Supper's ready." "This is our nephey and he's a doctor." Recognition. A difficult problem in arithmetic. The doctor to the rescue. "I'm just the happiest girl in the world." "I've come to pop the question, an' why don't I do it?" Brother and sister. "If it's a heifer, it's teh be mine." The sheriff. Arrested for stealing the diamonds. "Let me knock yer durned head off." The jewels found in Bernice's trunk.

ACT. III. Parlor of the Halsted home. "That was a lucky stroke—hiding those diamonds in her trunk." The schemer's plot miscarries. Abe and Sammy join hands. The lawyer. "Bully for her." Bradley tries to escape "No, yeh don't!" Arrested. "It means, dear, that you are to be persecuted no more." Wedding presents, and a w ɛ dance around them. "It is no trick at all to fool a young doctor."

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